



DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

DIVISION OF LAND RESOURCE PROTECTION

801 K STREET • MS 18-01 • SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95814

PHONE 916 / 324-0850 • FAX 916 / 327-3430 • TDD 916 / 324-2555 • WEBSITE conservation.ca.gov

September 23, 2009

VIA EMAIL: jkessler@energy.state.ca.us

John Kessler

Project Manager

Siting, Transmission and Environmental Protection Division

California Energy Commission

1516 Ninth Street, MS-15

Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Kessler:

Subject: Carrizo Energy Solar Farm Project - **DOCKET 07-AFC-8**

The Department of Conservation's (Department) Division of Land Resource Protection (Division) has reviewed the Preliminary Staff Report and other supporting documents for the Carrizo Energy Solar Farm (CESF). The Division monitors farmland conversion on a statewide basis and administers the California Land Conservation (Williamson) Act and other agricultural land conservation programs. We offer the following comments with respect to the project's impacts on agricultural land and resources.

Project Description

The proposed 640-acre CESF site is located in an unincorporated area of eastern San Luis Obispo County, and consists of one Assessor Parcel Number (APN 072-091-001). The proposed project site is immediately north of California State Route 58/Carrisa Highway (SR-58) and west of the communities of Simmler and California Valley. The CESF site currently consists of disturbed ranchland and abandoned farm structures, which would be demolished prior to proposed project construction. It is in an area zoned for agricultural uses as specified in the San Luis Obispo County General Land Use Plan and the property is not subject to a Williamson Act contract.

Comments

The Division has read the Preliminary Staff Assessment and concurs with the California Energy Commission's (CEC) recommendation of the following mitigation measure:

The CEC recommends Condition of Certification **LAND-1**, which requires the project owner to mitigate for the conversion of 640 acres of agricultural land to non-agricultural use by requiring the project to mitigate for loss of

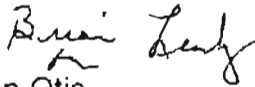
PROOF OF SERVICE (REVISED 7/27/09) FILED WITH
ORIGINAL MAILED FROM SACRAMENTO ON 9/24/09

agricultural lands at a level not to exceed a one-to-one ratio, which will help ensure that agricultural lands of the same or higher quality are conserved within the county. The components included in Condition of Certification **LAND-1** are based on: 1) similar conditions of certification used on other Energy Commission siting projects (e.g., Starwood, Panoche, and East Altamont) where agricultural land was converted to nonagricultural uses; 2) the Agricultural Land Conservation Program encouraged by the San Luis Obispo County in General Plan Policy AGP16 (SLOC, 2007b, p. 2-34); and 3) coordination with the Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County (LCSLO 2008). Staff believes that with the adoption and implementation of **LAND-1**, the impacts of agricultural land conversion would be reduced to less than significant levels, and there would be no net loss of productive agricultural land within San Luis Obispo County. Land use staff considers the effects of the 380-acre construction laydown area on land uses to be temporary, because the area would be restored to pre-construction conditions following the 35 months of CESF construction.

We highly recommend and would like to see this mitigation measure in the Final Staff Assessment and conditions of approval.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to comment on this project. Please provide this Department with the date of any hearings for this particular action, and any staff reports pertaining to it. If you have questions regarding our comments, or require technical assistance or information on agricultural land conservation, please contact Meri Meraz, Environmental Planner, at 801 K Street, MS 18-01, Sacramento, California 95814, or by phone at (916) 445-9411.

Sincerely,



Dan Otis
Program Manager
Williamson Act Program

cc: State Clearinghouse



**BEFORE THE ENERGY RESOURCES CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
1516 NINTH STREET, SACRAMENTO, CA 95814
1-800-822-6228 – WWW.ENERGY.CA.GOV**

**APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATION
FOR THE CARRIZO ENERGY
SOLAR FARM PROJECT**

Docket No. 07-AFC-8

**PROOF OF SERVICE
(Revised 7/27/2009)**

APPLICANT

Sean Kiernan
Development Director
Ausra, Inc.
303 Ravendale Drive
Mountain View, CA 94043
sean.kiernan@ausra.com

APPLICANT CONSULTANT

Angela Leiba, GISP
Senior Project Manager
GIS Manager/Visual Resource
Specialist
URS Corporation
1615 Murray Canyon Road, #1000
San Diego, CA 92108
angela_leiba@urscorp.com

Kristen E. Walker, J.D.
URS Corporation
1615 Murray Canyon Road, #1000
San Diego, CA 92108
kristen_e_walker@urscorp.com

COUNSEL FOR APPLICANT

Jane E. Luckhardt
DOWNEY BRAND
621 Capitol Mall, 18th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814
jluckhardt@downeybrand.com

INTERESTED AGENCIES

San Luis Obispo County
John McKenzie
976 Osos Street, Rm 300
San Luis Obispo, CA 93408
jdmckenzie@co.slo.ca.us

California ISO
e-recipient@caiso.com

INTERVENORS

Mr. John A. Ruskovich
13084 Soda Lake Road
Santa Margarita, CA 93453
agarnett@tcsn.com

Mr. Michael Strobridge
9450 Pronghorn Plains Road
Santa Margarita, CA 93453
mike_76@live.com

Law Offices of Samuel B. Johnston
Mr. Samuel B. Johnston
370 Grand Avenue, Suite 5
Oakland, CA 94610
E-mail preferred
Samjohnston@earthlink.net

Law Offices of Sharon E. Duggan
Ms. Sharon E. Duggan
370 Grand Avenue, Suite 5
Oakland, CA 94610
E-mail preferred
Sharon@sharonduggan.org

California Unions for Reliable Energy
(CURE)
c/o Tanya Gulesserian
Adams Broadwell Joseph & Cardozo
601 Gateway Boulevard, Suite 1000
South San Francisco, CA 94080
tgulesserian@adamsbroadwell.com

John Burch
Traditional Council Lead
Salinan Tribe
7070 Morro Road, #A
Atascadero, CA 93422
salinantribe@aol.com

Robin Bell, Carrisa Alliance for
Responsible Energy
P.O. Box 4280
Paso Robles, CA 93447
robin@midstateexpo.com

Environmental Center of
San Luis Obispo (ECOSLO)
c/o Babak Naficy
P.O. Box 13728
San Luis Obispo, CA 93406
babaknaficy@sbcglobal.net

* Joshua Basofin, California
Representative
Defenders of Wildlife
1303 J Street, Suite 270
Sacramento, California 95814
E-mail preferred
jbasofin@defenders.org

ENERGY COMMISSION

JEFFREY D. BYRON
Commissioner and Presiding Member cholmes@energy.state.ca.us
jbyron@energy.state.ca.us

JULIA LEVIN
Commissioner and Associate Member mdoughto@energy.state.ca.us
jlevin@energy.state.ca.us

Gary Fay
Hearing Officer publicadviser@energy.state.ca.us
Gfay@energy.state.ca.us

John Kessler
Project Manager
jkessler@energy.state.ca.us

Caryn Holmes
Staff Counsel
cholmes@energy.state.ca.us

Michael Doughton
Staff Counsel
mdoughto@energy.state.ca.us

Elena Miller
Public Adviser
publicadviser@energy.state.ca.us

DECLARATION OF SERVICE

I, Teraja Golston, declare that on September 24, 2009, I served and filed copies of the attached CA Dept of Conservation's PSA Comments Re Land Use. The original document, filed with the Docket Unit, is accompanied by a copy of the most recent Proof of Service list, located on the web page for this project at: **[<http://www.energy.ca.gov/sitingcases/carrizo/index.html>]**. The document has been sent to both the other parties in this proceeding (as shown on the Proof of Service list) and to the Commission's Docket Unit, in the following manner:

(Check all that Apply)

For service to all other parties:

X sent electronically to all email addresses on the Proof of Service list;

X by personal delivery or by depositing in the United States mail at Sacramento, California with first-class postage thereon fully prepaid and addressed as provided on the Proof of Service list above to those addresses **NOT** marked "email preferred."

AND

For filing with the Energy Commission:

X sending an original paper copy and one electronic copy, mailed and emailed respectively, to the address below **(preferred method)**;

OR

 depositing in the mail an original and 12 paper copies, as follows:

CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION

Attn: Docket No. 07-AFC-8
1516 Ninth Street, MS-4
Sacramento, CA 95814-5512
docket@energy.state.ca.us

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Original Signature in Dockets
Teraja` Golston